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Story of the Argus [Rock Island, Ill.]
(1915)



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he STORY of THE ARGUS

1851 .. 1925



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Illinois Historical Survey

P R E F A C E

THE STORY of The Argus is one of success in the newspaper field for a reason which binds it forever close to the interests of the people of its territory—and that reason is its unfailing service to the community at the sacrifice of all else. If it were not for this ideal, The Argus would long ago have joined the ranks of those Rock Island newspapers which for one reason or another have passed into oblivion while The Argus continued on its straight course.

Keeping faith with its growing community, guided not always by the majority but always by what it believed to be right and ethical in the handling of its news and the conduct of its business, The Argus has enjoyed prosperity.


4485
It has ever been abreast of the times. Changes for the better, in policy, in equipment and in methods of management, have always been adopted by those who happened to be in control when new theories along these lines came to their attention. The Argus was among the first newspapers in the middle west to drop the practice of what was known as "personal journalism," when printing the news unalloyed by personal observations, and confining what was printed in the news columns to facts, became recognized as the ideal of the newspaper business.

Where before the editor had eliminated all matter, whether it was live news or not, which for any reason might be construed as favorable to political or other enemies of the paper, or harmful to its friends, the present policy of "All the News All the Time" was adopted. In adopting it the management recognized in full its obligation to its subscribers, that they were entitled to receive complete information on every matter of public interest.

West Coast
That this course has won the public's favor is evident in the physical growth of this institution. As a result of its prosperity, and because of its conviction that the pursuance of its ideals will bring even greater achievements with the advancing years, The Argus has erected a new home to house its plant, allowing for considerable growth, and in which to serve the public in greater measure than ever before. This booklet contains the story of The Argus from its earliest chapters down to the present busy episode.



Photograph of bronze tablet of the late John W. Potter in bas-relief, which occupies a panel on north wall of business office in new Argus building



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Seventy-five Years in Business in Rock Island

A Small Beginning

IN 1851 a rear room in the Whittaker & Evans building, located just east of the most recent Argus plant on Second avenue, was converted into a crude printing shop, and therein was issued, on Oct. 18, the first edition of the paper which was to become eventually The Argus. The room was on the second floor and did not communicate directly with the street, but there was no rush about getting copies down on the street or into the mail without a moment's delay, as has since become the case.

Second-hand Equipment

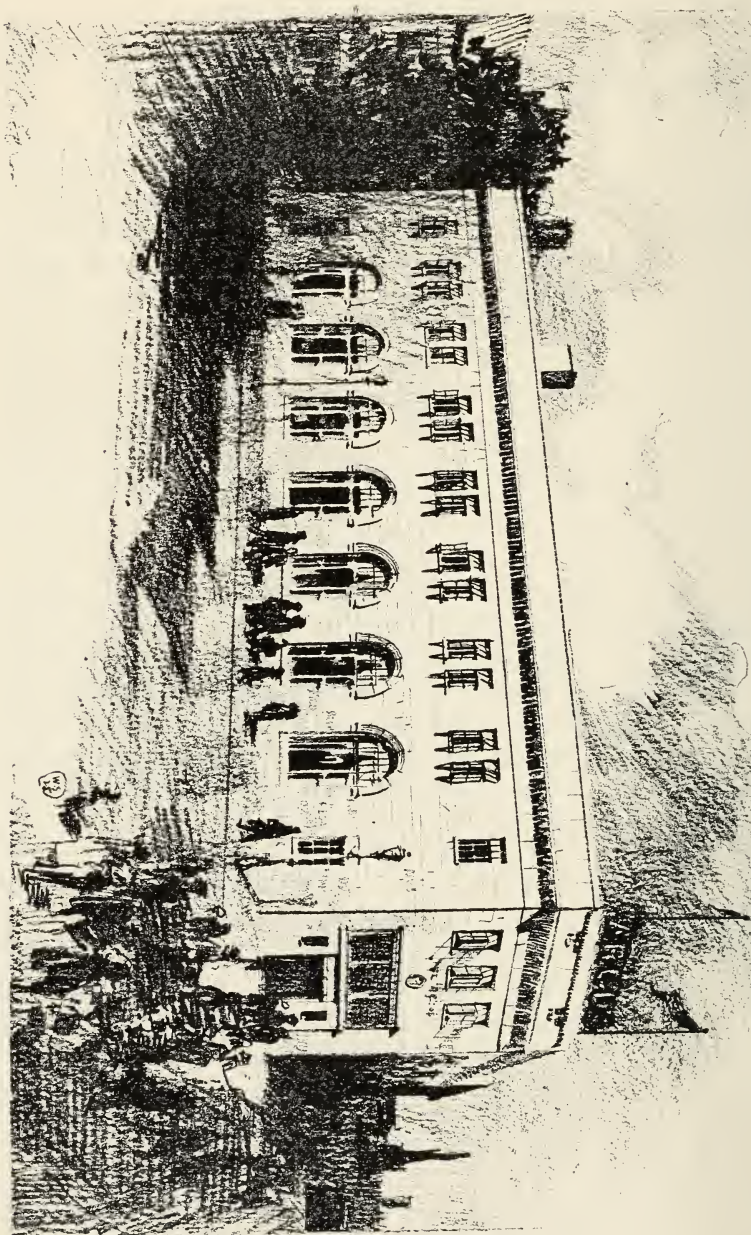
The Rock Island Republican, as it was called, was issued weekly. Its proprietors were Fred S. Nichols and John W. Dunham. Their machinery and other apparatus had been purchased in St. Louis, Mo., second hand. Both men had formerly been employed on the St. Louis Intelligencer and had considerable experience in newspaper work.

J. B. Danforth, Jr., Buys Interest

Dunham, being a southerner, while his partner was a northerner, became tired of the undertaking after six weeks, and sold his share in it to Nichols, returning south. Until 1852 Nichols continued in sole charge of the enterprise, and in November of that year he sold a half interest to J. B. Danforth, Jr., who was destined to continue on the publication's staff from 1852 to 1869.

Nichols sold out to Danforth in the spring of 1853, and during the next three years the latter continued in sole charge. This brief

THE STORY OF THE ARGUS



period was an eventful one for the growing publication. It saw the removal of the plant into new quarters, saw the paper become a daily and witnessed the changing of its name and another partial change in ownership.

Eventful Years:
Location and Name
Changed; Becomes
a Daily

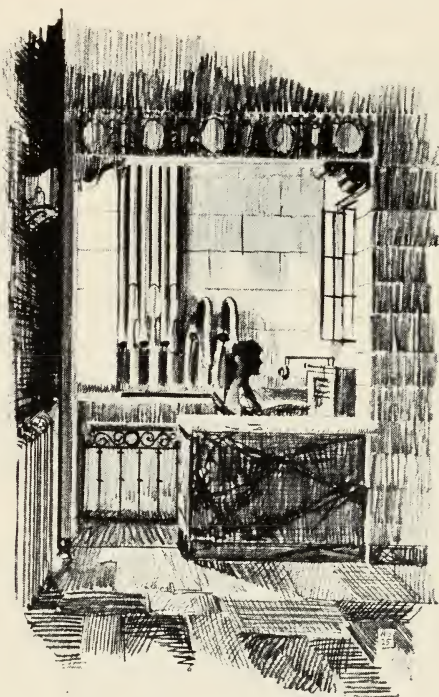
During these three years, in 1854 to be exact, the Buford block, at the northeast corner of Second avenue and Seventeenth street, east, was completed. In this, the first four-story structure in Rock Island, The Republican at once took up quarters, which it retained 17 years. On July 13, 1854, the first daily was issued. At that time there was no other daily nearer than Dubuque, Ia.

Present Name,
"The Argus,"
in Use 70 Years

The present name, The Argus, was adopted in 1855 in conformance with a change in the country's political nomenclature. It had been given the name of the Republican as merely an expression of its endorsement of the republican type of government, for the Republican party had not yet been formed as a political entity and the term was still used only in its governmental sense. In 1855, however, a group whose political beliefs were opposed to those championed by the publisher of The Republican had organized a party under the name of the Republican party. Lest there should be a misunderstanding in the public mind as to the principles for which the publication stood, its name was changed, in 1855, to The Argus. That has continued to be its title for the last 70 years.

Shurley Buys
Share in 1856;
Many Changes

At the end of this eventful three-year era, Mr. Danforth, in 1856, sold a share in The Argus ownership to Robert V. Shurley. The next 25 years saw frequent changes in management, a condition which, in those days of



Tube and phone central station

newspaper governance by personal political beliefs and the holding of radically opposed political creeds, was not a healthful one. Many alterations in policy, and, indeed, in the form of the paper itself brought on apace the inevitable failure. The eclipse, however, was destined to be only temporary.

First of the changes during this era was the purchase, on Sept. 16, 1857, by Pershing & Connelly, the latter Major H. C. Connelly, of the interests not owned by Mr. Shurley. Pershing & Connelly

were then publishers of the Rock Islander, and the two publications were combined as the Rock Islander and Argus.

A week after this transaction Mr. Shurley sold out to Milton Jones, who held an editorial position on the paper until 1881. On Sept. 16, 1859, J. B. Danforth again obtained an interest, buying out Pershing & Connelly, and the paper once more became The Argus. In the meantime, on July 18, 1859, the daily had been suspended and a tri-weekly was begun. The daily, however, was resumed Sept. 1, 1861.

**"The Argus"
Again Used,
Issued Tri-weekly**

**Danforth Sells
to McNeal**

Robert F. McNeal bought out the Danforth holdings in 1869, and in turn parted with them to J. S. Drake on Jan. 1, 1870. Three

years later The Argus company was formed and incorporated with a capital stock of \$32,000.

The paper went into its first exclusive quarters in 1871, when the Buford heirs erected The Argus block next to the alley on the east side of East Seventeenth street. Ten years later, Richardson & Powers acquired a controlling interest in the company and for a brief year they waged a struggle against adversity. At the end of that time, however, in 1881, financial reverses necessitated a suspension of the paper. This would have been the end of The Argus under all ordinary circumstances.

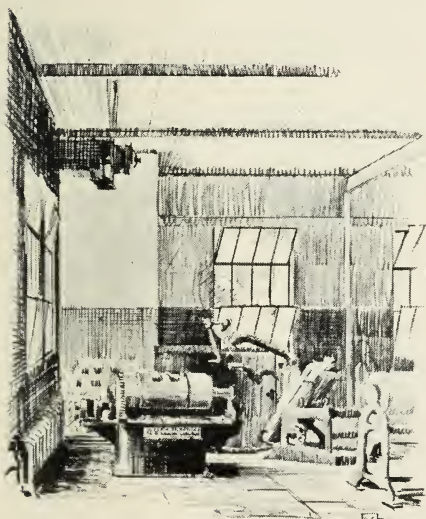
There was a different fate in store for it, though, and its new lease of life began with the advent of J. W. Potter, publisher of the Freeport Bulletin, into its affairs. He bought the wrecked newspaper, and sent his son,

the late J. W. Potter, Jr., here to manage it. The first issue under the new management came out Aug. 2, 1882. In May, 1885, the elder Mr. Potter died, and the son became the sole owner.

Little but the name was left to The Argus when Mr. Potter took charge of the publication, and the task of placing it on a paying basis was one which required a great amount of persistent effort and of journalistic ability. The old quarters on East Seventeenth street were out-

In Its First
Exclusive
Quarters

Potter Takes Over
Control; New
Lease of Life



Stereotyping department

Old Quarters
Are Outgrown

grown in 1888, and the building on Second avenue, most recently occupied, was purchased by Mr. Potter and remodeled, to become the paper's home. The removal took place during June of that year.

Six Years as
Morning
Paper

During six years of The Daily Argus' history it was a morning paper. The first Daily Argus was issued as an evening paper on July 13, 1854. It was changed to a morning paper on Dec. 17, 1855, and published as such until Nov. 18, 1861. From that date until the present time it has been an evening publication.

Absorbs the
Daily Union,
Long Time Rival

After Mr. Potter's death in 1898, the J. W. Potter company was organized, and the paper has since been published under that corporate name, with Mr. Potter's widow, Mrs. J. W. Potter, as president of the company.

Prior to the erection of its new home, the last principal passage in the story of The Argus was its absorption of the Rock Island Daily Union, in 1920. The Union was founded in 1862, and at the time of its purchase by The Argus was published by the Union Printing company. It was an evening daily, and the leading features of its service were incorporated into The Argus.



The Argus' New Home

Healthy Growth
Makes Old Plant
Obsolete

WHEN THE Second avenue building which The Argus has just vacated was first purchased and occupied, in 1888, its size was ample for the needs of the newspaper plant. Spacious and comfortable quarters, they seemed at that time, and so they were for nearly two decades. But as time went on and the staff and equipment expanded, the building became less adequate. Even the acquisition of the store room adjoining the business office on the east, and its conversion into work space, five years ago, only temporarily relieved the situation.

Begin Making
Provisions for
Removal

Plans were already under way, however, for the erection of a modern publication plant for The Argus. Its publishers had realized for several years that the old building had outlived its usefulness as far as The Argus was concerned, and were arranging their affairs to provide for the eventual necessary removal to a new headquarters.

Building
Crowded Past
Capacity

The year 1924 saw cramped conditions existing in the old building. The newsroom was crowded to the last inch of work space. The press was working beyond its capacity. In the composing room there was a similar condition, a crying need for more equipment, and yet no place to put it. It was time to replace the makeshift arrangements which resulted with a plant of an adequate and permanent nature. Therefore the long considered plans were made to materialize.

An ideal site for the new building was found at the southwest corner of the intersection



Business office public space

of Eighteenth street and Fourth avenue. Easily accessible to all office buildings, business houses, banks and municipal and county buildings, a block from the principal business district but in the only direction in which that district can expand, the location which was chosen will undoubtedly be increasingly strategic. Cervin & Horn, Rock Island architects, were commissioned to design the structure. They were instructed to make it such a building

**Ample Room
for Future Growth**

as the organization and the community could view with continuous pride. Among other things they were instructed to make the structure roomy enough to provide for at least 100 per cent expansion of all departments. Both of these admonitions, the publishers of The Argus feel, have been capably carried out.

**Erect Thoroughly
Modern Plant at
Cost of \$300,000**

The new home of The Argus is as modern in all particulars as is any newspaper plant in the country. The total cost, inclusive of new equipment, is \$300,000. It is appointed and arranged with but one purpose in view—to better in every possible way its service to its readers, through promoting efficiency by providing modern equipment and arranging it conveniently. The distinctive features of the plant were not evolved in a single week, a month or a year, but over a course of years of thought and investigation on the part of the company's executives. During the last three years they have made fre-

Worked to
Make Edifice
Most Serviceable

quent trips of inspection to the newer newspaper plants far and near, obtaining ideas for the building. Plans already made were shaped to conform with their findings, until it is now believed that all of the more common faults found in this type of building have been eliminated and that every portion of The Argus plant is 100 per cent serviceable.

Construction
Is Fireproof
Throughout

Its location gives the building both north and east exposures for the main facade. Consisting of two stories and a basement, with a mezzanine floor around the business office and the press room, the construction up to the second floor level is of reinforced concrete and the second floor is built of structural steel. Thus, the entire structure is fireproof.



The new home

Its style is Italian renaissance, and the material of the exterior is select buff limestone from the famous Indiana quarries. The general character of the exterior would be described as a series of seven arches flanked by larger masses of masonry on the east elevation and one large arch on the first story of the north elevation. The alley and court side is faced with a vitreous buff colored brick. The interior court, which will be entirely filled when the next extension is made, is faced with common brick. All sash is steel. The main entrance doors

Exterior Is
One of Beauty;
Limestone Finish

Details Simple

A Rock Island
Building in All
Particulars

Built on Rock
Stratum Underlying
Entire City

and frame are iron and glass. All hardware is bronze. Pockets were left in the sidewalks adjacent to the building at intervals and ivy plants are being trained to grow over the walls. Additional landscaping has been effected on the Eighteenth street side by a row of Lombardy poplar trees, each surrounded by a barberry hedge. Simple cut stone carving of motifs relating to the Greek mythology from which The Argus received its name has been introduced in the walls adjacent to the entrances. Two flag poles, one for the American flag and the other for weather flags, surmount the facade, where there will also be placed a large electric sign bearing the one word, Argus. The second story has rectangular openings of pleasing size and proportions. The beautiful effect is obtained by the perfection in the proportions of the masses and openings, as the detail has all been kept very simple and refined.

Rock Island architects designed the building and Rock Island contractors, the Henry W. Horst company, erected it, the sub-contracts being let to Rock Island concerns wherever possible. All materials which could be obtained in Rock Island or through Rock Island firms were so purchased. It is a Rock Island building through and through.

As the name of the city indicates there is a stratum of rock which appears from twelve to fourteen feet under the surface of the ground, and all structural portions of the building and the foundation rest on it.

Owing to the proximity of the great Mississippi river with its large volume of water, special precautions were necessary to assure

Extra Care Taken With Waterproofing

waterproofing of the basement. Not content with providing only one means of guarding against the danger of water seeping into the building, The Argus has incorporated three distinct and separate methods to supplement each other.

Valves and Electric Pump, Flood Safeguard

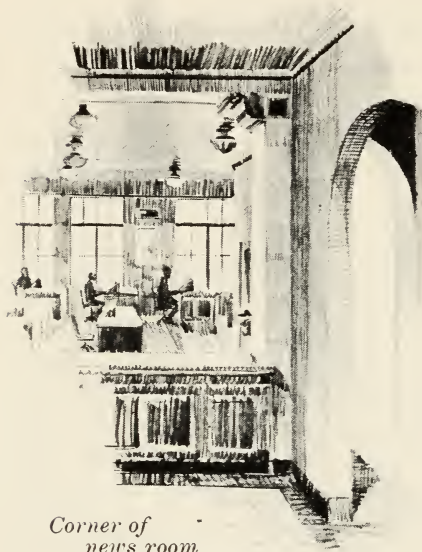
The entire lot was equipped with a system of porous drain tile, all of which terminated in a sump four feet in diameter and eight feet deep located under the boiler room. Valves were located on the ends of these drain tiles so that at seasons when the water is low these valves are closed, and at times of high water the valves are opened. The sump fills with water from these drain tiles and this water in turn is discharged from the sump into the sewer by means of an automatic electric pump.

The reinforced concrete, of which the walls and floors are composed, was made integrally waterproof by the addition of 10 per cent hydrated lime, which securely fills the pores in the concrete.

Pitch Membrane Under Concrete Floor

A waterproofing membrane was placed under the floor on the outside of all basement walls. This consisted of two layers of fabric with separate coats of pitch, very similar to a heavy "composition" roof properly caulked. In order to get the floor thoroughly waterproofed, a thin slab of concrete was first poured over the entire basement area. Upon this was laid this waterproof membrane, then the final floor slab was set on top.

Inasmuch as the bulletin board is the most important feature on the exterior of a news-



*Corner of
news room*

**Bulletin Board
in Prominent
Location**

**Most Modern
Facilities for
Bulletining**

paper plant, it was given the most prominent position by cutting the corner of this building at an angle of 45 degrees and placing the bulletin board directly above the corner entrance. This location enables the paper to accommodate a great crowd of spectators on the sidewalks and streets, as it is at the intersection of two streets. The experience in the old building was that where the bulletin board is located in the middle of the block the street is not deep enough to take care of the

crowds present. By placing the bulletin board on the corner there is no obstruction of private business houses which would otherwise be located across the street.

The bulletin board is set behind a large sheet of plate glass and all operations such as keeping the score boards and operating the animated football or baseball game boards will be accomplished from behind in the bulletin board pit. This pit is directly above the vestibule over the main entrance and below the news room, and is reached by stairway from the news room. The rear wall of the bulletin board room has a large opening, which will enable The Argus to place a projection machine on the mezzanine floor and project bulletins such as election returns on a transparent screen located directly behind the plate glass of the bulletin board. The location and special details of this bulletin board system are an innovation in the news-

Marble Counter
Feature of
Business Office

paper industry and sets a high standard for providing the public with information. The bulletins will be lighted at night by a row of electric lamps located in the cornice which overhangs the board.

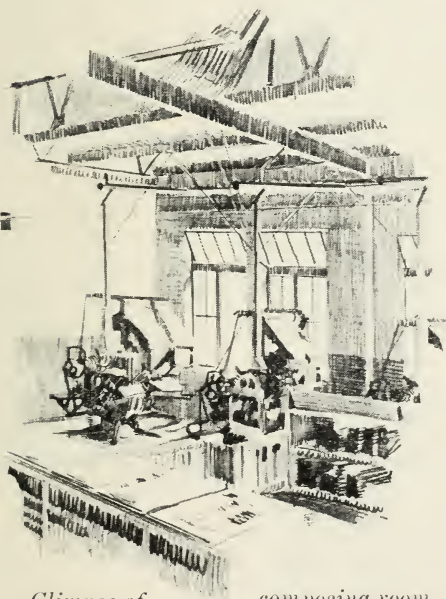
Beautiful Floor
of Stone and Slate.
Plaster Ceiling

The business office occupies the north half of the first story. The main entrance is on the corner and a minor entrance near the west side. One passes through the iron entrance doors and a vestibule into the public space of the business office. The public space is separated from the work space by a long curving counter with a beautiful verd-antique marble top and base, and a madre-veined Alabama marble die.

The floor of the public space is most unusual, consisting of beautifully variegated shapes and colors of stone and slate. Stone and slate floors have become very popular for

high grade buildings in the last few years, as they are beautiful, more easily kept clean than is tile, and very lasting. One of the shades used in this floor, particularly noted, is called the mettowee stone and comes in variegated tones of red.

The ceiling is of ornamental plaster of exquisite shape and proportion, with ornamental plaster details of rare charm and beauty, being deeply coffered and conforming in general contour and outline with the architectural quality of the



Glimpse of *composing room*

Stair Colors
Harmonize With
Slate Office Floor

room. The work space back of the counter is covered with linoleum. The walls of this entire room are built with a Caenstone finish and a verd-antique marble base. The mezzanine floor, which is located on the west and south, has a balustrade of slender wrought iron bars. The main stair leading to the mezzanine and from there to the news room on the second story is made up of reinforced concrete with terrazzo treads and risers. In the terrazzo on the stairs were introduced various colors of dark marble to harmonize pleasingly with the variegated shades of the slate floor of the business office. The balustrade is made up of twisted wrought iron rods with a wood handrail.

Private Offices
Adjoin
Business Space

The private office of the treasurer is located on the first floor adjacent to the business office on the Eighteenth street side. It is in close contact with all business operations and readily accessible to the public. It is a beautiful room of excellent proportions, having a wainscot of genuine walnut panelling with a lozenge pattern worked into the finish. Walls and ceilings are decorated attractively.

Are Finished
in Walnut
and Glass

The business manager's office is also located within the business space and adjacent to the circulation manager's office. The walls are composed of walnut and glass, giving complete supervision of operations of the business office and placing the business manager not only in touch with the business office but the circulation, mailing and press rooms.

At the foot of the stair and adjacent to the reporter's entrance near the west wall is lo-

Phone Terminal a Vital Part of News Plant

cated a vital part of the newspaper plant. Here are the terminals of the telephone system, inter-phone system and pneumatic tubes, placed in such a convenient position that the operator in charge can also give out information, as she is in constant communication with all departments of the plant and is located at a point where she can observe everybody going in or going out of the business portion of the building. The public space will be served by two private telephone booths.

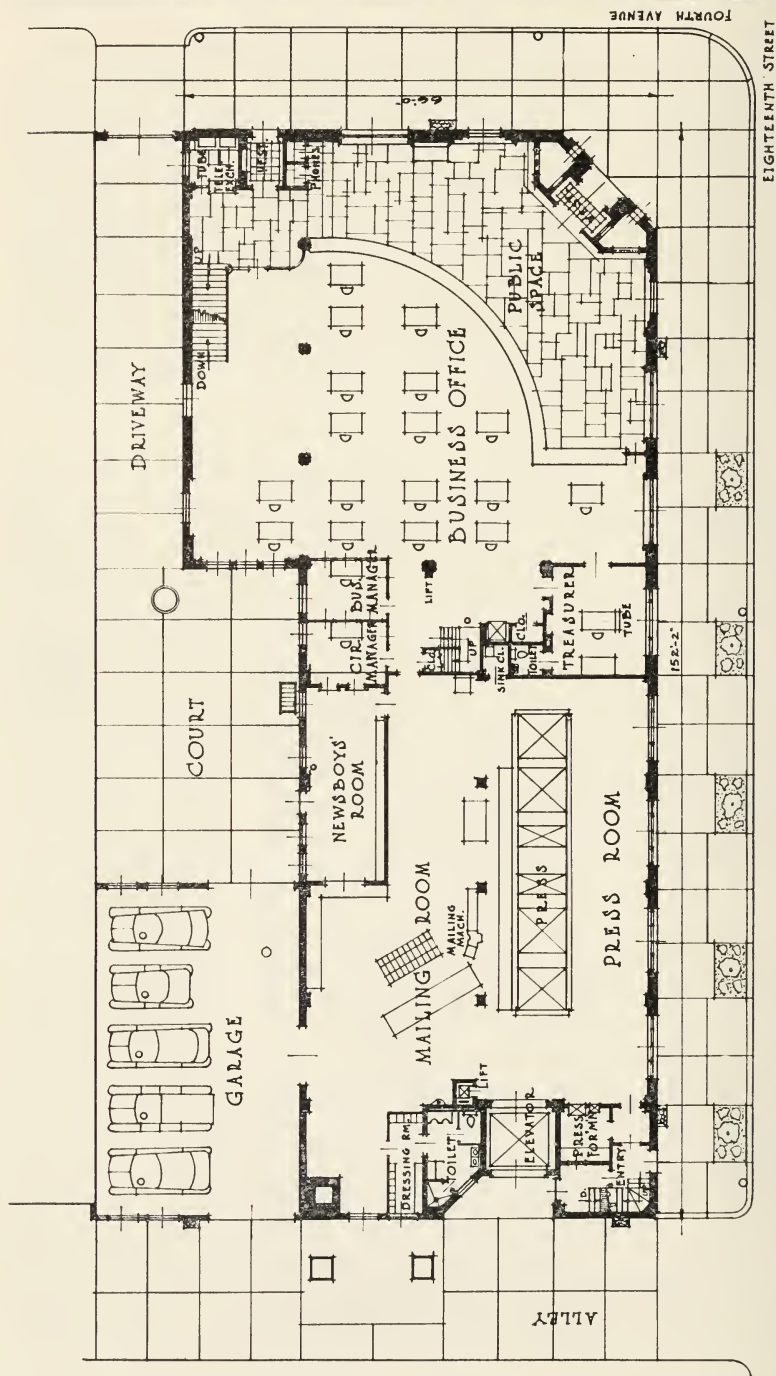
Mezzanine Linked With First Floor by Two Staircases

In addition to the main stairway leading to the mezzanine and second story a service stairway connects the business office directly with the composing room. Going from the business office up the main stair one reaches the mezzanine floor where is located the women's rest room, a charming apartment having windows overlooking the business office and being completely equipped for the comfort and convenience of the women patrons and employees. At the other end of the mezzanine floor is located the men's wash room. All wash rooms and toilet rooms in the business office have terrazzo floors and marble wainscots. The balance of the mezzanine floor is available for future work space. The floors are of terrazzo and composition.

News Room Located on Second Floor

Continuing up the main stair to the second story, which contains the editorial rooms of the building, one enters first the reception room which opens directly onto the news room, editor's office, consultation room and managing editor's office. The reception room has sand finished plaster walls, terrazzo floor and arched openings leading to the private

THE STORY OF THE ARGUS



THE ARGUS BUILDING
THE J.W. POTTER COMPANY
ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS.

FIRST FLOOR PLAN
SCALE
0 2 4 6 8 10 20

CERVIN & HORN, ARCHITECTS.
ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS.

offices. Directly across one entire side is a beautiful walnut counter with a linoleum top, at which information is obtained regarding any portion of the editorial department.

Daylight
Lavishly
Supplied

The news room occupies more than half of the front portion of the building. It is lighted by numerous windows both on the east and on the north, as well as a skylight in the center.

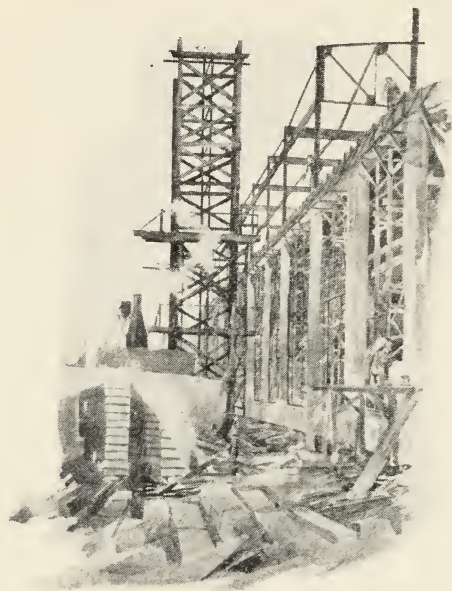
The editor's office and consultation room, adjacent, are located on the north side. The editor's office has a walnut wainscot with built-in bookcase and all cabinet trim with a sand finish plaster walls and modestly ornamented ceiling.

Library a
Pleasing Feature

The managing editor's office is on the other side of the reception room and reached by a small private passageway. Adjacent to this room is the library, lighted by skylight, and accessible from all portions of the editorial department. There are ample wardrobes, two long distance telephone booths and a specially equipped and sound-insulated telegraph room located between the news room and the composing room.

Composing Room
Has "Saw Teeth"
Skylights

The Argus composing room occupies most of the space back of the editorial rooms. It is lighted from two sides and from a series of saw teeth skylights located in such a way that the light from the skylight is entirely from the north, to do away with the annoyance of sunlight and to insure a steady flow of light at all times. Saw teeth skylights for composing rooms are considered the very best equipment and are used by the most up-to-date plants. The sash extend the en-



Under construction, 1924

tire width of the skylight and are operated for ventilation by chains and pulleys. Special care has been taken throughout this composing room to provide adequate light and ventilation. The floor is made up of creosote wood blocks set on end, and is practically everlasting, an exceedingly comfortable floor on which to work.

The linotype machines are located in two rows along the Eighteenth street side, the balance of the equipment being distributed

throughout the composing room. The walls and ceiling have been painted white and the wainscot and steel work gray.

Other Features of Second and Mezzanine Stories

The stereotyping room is located adjacent to the composing room in the southwest corner and unusually well lighted and ventilated. Supplementing the natural ventilation of windows are two electric fans, while the fumes from the melting pots will be taken off directly by flues. The stereotyping room is also in direct connection with the large freight elevator. A small lift is provided for sending the plates directly from the stereotyping room to the press room. The balance of the second story is taken up by the wash room and toilet room for the composing room, and the freight elevator, service passageway and stairs. The service stairs are located in the southeast corner and lead down to the mezzanine floor which provides a splendid

Plenty of Ventilation

Building Has
Auditorium for
Public Benefit

outlook, at a high level, of the entire press room. On this same level is located the lunch room and recreation room for employes of the composing and press departments as well as a general meeting room which will accommodate between one hundred fifty and two hundred people. This meeting room will be used for gatherings of public or semi-public nature and is very conveniently located to be accessible either from the front or rear of the building. It overlooks the press room and operations can be observed from this point.

Modern Features
Introduced in
Press Room

The entire south half of the first story of the building is occupied by the press room, mailing room and news boys' room, the press room being located on the Eighteenth street side and visible from the street through five of the large arched windows. It is a high room, running through the first story and mezzanine floor, and contains the Duplex press. This room is lined with a wainscot of brown salt-glazed brick to a height of six feet. The balance is sand-finished plaster with a smooth plaster beamed ceiling. Runways for the Brownhoist, a crane for general use in connection with the press, have been

located on the two long walls. On the south end of the press room is located the press foreman's office and all electrical controlling devices. Adjacent to the press foreman's office is the freight elevator, which is used for hoisting rolls of paper to the press room floor as well as for unloading the paper from trucks into the



Press room

Large Mailing
Room Well
Located

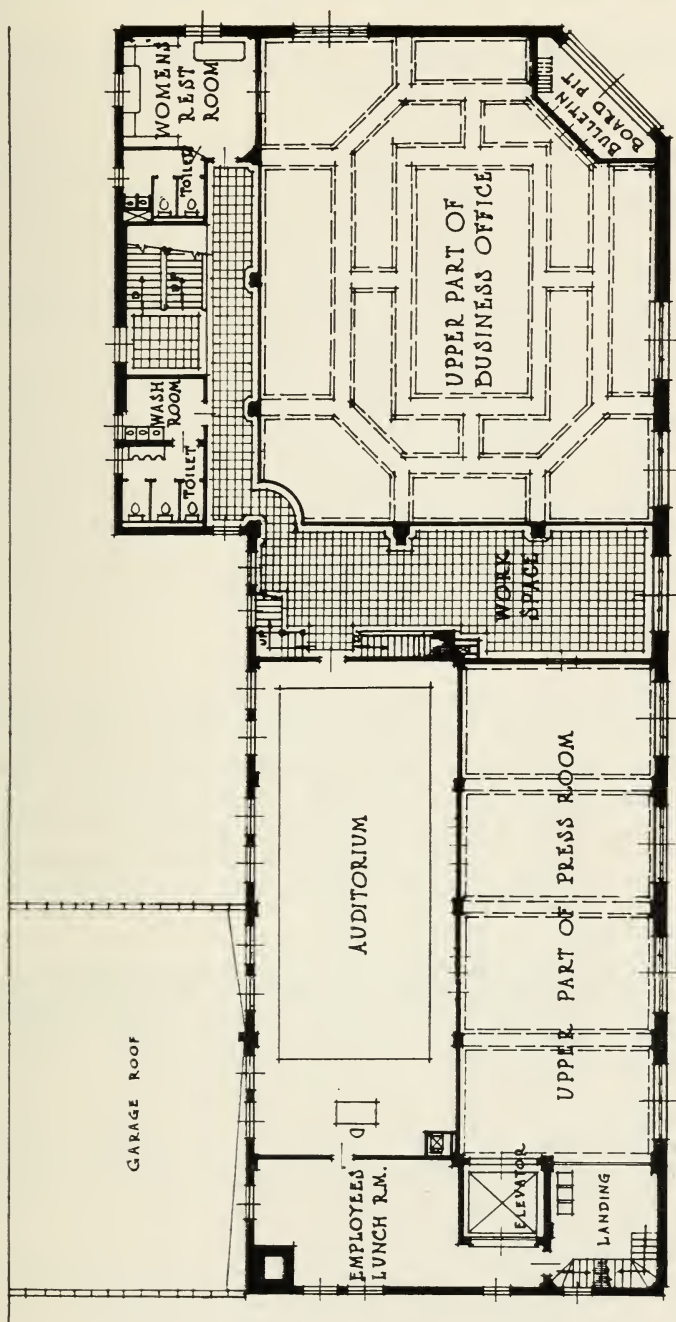
basement. This elevator is conveniently located for all operations connected with the handling of paper and the fact that it is a full size elevator makes it useful for many other operations. Adjacent to the press room and under the mezzanine floor is located the mailing room, provided with the necessary tables, counters and racks, both for the distribution of local papers and wrapping or bundling of those that are mailed out.

Load Trucks
From Mailing
Room Under Roof

A special room has been built for the news boys, where they obtain their papers. This news boys' room is accessible from the court. The wash room, which is fitted up with showers, is located adjacent to the mailing room. From the mailing room there is a large opening protected by steel rolling shutters which open out into the garage and loading room. As a large portion of each issue of The Argus is distributed by trucks, these trucks drive directly into the garage and loading space and receive their consignments while under a roof. The garage is large enough to accommodate the trucks which deliver The Argus, as well as the several other company vehicles.

Paper Storage,
Vault for Files
and Heating Plant
in Basement

Most of the basement is used for paper storage. The paper is loaded directly from the trucks onto the elevator and dropped to the basement where it is placed on hand trucks and taken to racks which are set three or four inches above the floor. In addition to the basement storage space, there is a large vault located conveniently at the foot of the business office stairs. It is equipped with up-to-date steel shelving and will contain the bound files of The Argus, valuable because of their age, which goes back as far as 75



THE ARGUS BUILDING
THE J.W. POTTER COMPANY
ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS.

MEZZANINE FLOOR PLAN
SCALE 1/8" = 1'-0"

CERVIN & HORN, ARCHITECTS
ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS.

years. The boiler room is located at the south end of the building and contains two Kewanee smokeless firebox boilers.

**Wired for All
Possible Electric
Facilities**

Just as the day lighting has been arranged on a scale as lavish as possible, so the electric lighting, too, has been made generous. The inspection trips made by owners and architects have demonstrated that a newspaper plant rarely has too much light and usually not enough. Outlets, therefore, have been distributed at intervals where there might be any chance of their being used, providing local desk illumination as well as general illumination. The electric fixtures of the business office and private offices are works of art, consisting of the very finest bronze and high grade glass in charming designs.

**Compressed
Air to Clean
Big Press**

The building has been equipped with an adequate number of wash rooms and toilet rooms and all plumbing is of the very highest grade. Ice water has been piped to the fountains in the various parts of the building. Compressed air has been supplied for cleaning the various parts of the press.

The Dunham vacuum system of steam heating has been installed and is to be supplemented by ventilation from several univents which provide fresh warmed air.

**Well Screened
and Ventilated**

All openings throughout the building have been screened with copper screens in metal frames.

The roof of the building is of gypsum tile covered with Trinidad Lake asphalt.

How The News Becomes a Newspaper

Most Intangible
of Raw Materials

IN THIS manufactory the most intangible of raw materials—the spoken word, a thought, or the observation of an occurrence—is made into something concrete and of great importance to modern man, the daily newspaper. Entering the plant through one of two principal channels, this raw material follows a course scientifically worked out. It is received in the front end of the new Argus building and moves rearward, taking on a more substantial and orderly form at every handling, and emerges at the rear of the plant set down in black and white and ready to be swiftly distributed to its readers.

For instance, observe the route followed by a piece of advertising matter. It is telephoned or mailed in, or brought in by one of the advertising solicitors to the business office, which occupies the front section of the ground floor.

Ads Handled in
Business Office

The main entrance opens directly into the spacious and handsomely decorated business office with its Caenstone-finished walls and an ornamental white plaster ceiling. Inside a curving counter are the desks of those employes who handle display and want ads, those who supervise the distribution of The Argus to subscribers and news agencies, and those who attend to the purchasing of materials, collection of accounts and other financial matters. Offices are provided here for the treasurer, business manager, advertising manager and circulation manager.

Carefully Looked
Over Before Going
Upstairs

The advertisement received here is converted into copy, being marked with directions for the printers, indicating its size, the kind of type to be used and what illustrations it is to contain. Then it is sent, in pneumatic tubes, to the composing room at the rear of the second floor. In the composing room it is converted into type, either set by hand or on Linotype machines.

News and Other
Copy Meet in
Composing Room

As the advertising and news matter meet in the composing room, to traverse the rest of the route together, the subsequent process is common to the entire body of matter of which the newspaper is composed. Therefore, consider the news-gathering section of the plant.

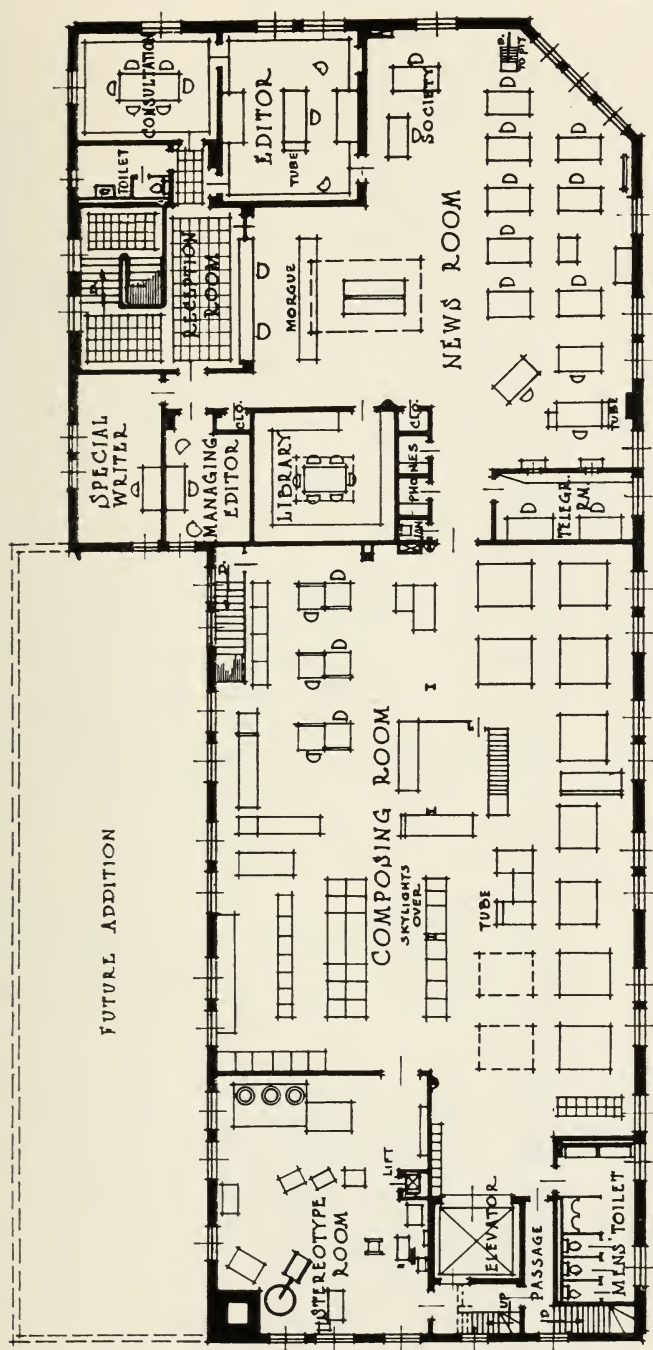
Central Control
for Telephone
Calls

From the central switch board through which all telephone calls into and out of the building, as well as between departments, are handled, located in the northwest corner of the first floor, just west of the Fourth avenue side entrance, lines extend to telephones on each of the desks in the news room, which occupies the entire front of the second floor. These are kept busy during working hours, carrying into The Argus office news of all sorts from the city and nearby territory. In this large, well-lighted room, typewriters chatter incessantly, as the reporters set down the events of the day, and the editors alter or "head up" their copy.

Getting the News
in Shape

All of the news-gathering resources of The Argus have their terminals here. At a desk beside the room where the Associated Press telegraph news from the wide world comes in over a special leased wire, is the news

THE STORY OF THE ARGUS



THE ARGUS BUILDING
THE J.W. POTTER COMPANY
ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS.

SECOND FLOOR PLAN

SCALE

CERVIN & HORN, ARCHITECTS
ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS.

News Editor
Directs Force
of Reporters

editor. Surrounding him is the copy desk, or rather a group of four desks at which the telegraph editor, sports editor, state news editor and city editor are placed. This group heads all of the departments of news-gathering. Besides the state, national and world news which comes in press association wires and special dispatches, and the Rock Island city and tri-city news, this group supervises the covering and handling of feature stories, church news, sporting news, music, dramatic and motion picture news, and miscellaneous matter. The news editor supervises all of it and assigns reporters to their work, while his four associates on the copy desk edit and head up the copy. Theirs is the responsibility for the correctness of facts, phrasing, spelling and punctuation of all of The Argus news as it appears in the printed form. Nearby is the row of desks where the city news reporters work. In the north end of the room is located the society editor and her assistant. The managing editor, who writes editorials and prepares copy for the editorial page, has an office just off the southwest corner of the news room.

Electric Conveyor
for Copy

From the copy desk, an overhead electric conveyor extends to the composing room, which occupies the rear of the second floor. Copy is sent to the printers on this conveyor.

From "Hot
News" Into
"Cold Type"

When the news copy arrives in the composing room it is placed on a table at the terminal of the electric conveyers, and later sorted into classifications according to the type of news it deals with. It is then hung on several hooks, from which the printers take it to transfer it into type. In the meantime, the advertising copy is arriving

through the pneumatic tubes. It is sorted and classified also, some going to the printers who set into type by hand, and some going to the type-setting machines.

Most of
Type-setting
Accomplished by
Machinery

The eight type-setting machines, all Linotypes, probably the most intricate, certainly the nearest "human" mechanical devices used in the process of publishing, are ranged in two rows along the east wall. On these operators set up all of the news material and most of the advertising copy, into lines of type. To do this the operator presses keys arranged on a keyboard similar to that of a typewriter, and operates several small levers, the Linotype doing the rest. Thus a huge saving of time is effected, over the amount required to set all type by hand. In another part of the composing room is the hand-setting department, with its many cases of type and its several printers, who set up display advertising and a few varieties of the news headlines requiring large type.

Molded in
Pasteboard, Then
in Metal

Here the type, and pictures or advertising copy in the form of "cuts" or "casts," are fitted into metal "forms," oblong frames just the size of newspaper pages. In fact, they are the original negatives of pages of the newspaper. These forms are rolled into a back room on "turtles," which are wheel tables of steel, for the stereotyping process. In this room the form is covered with a specially prepared pasteboard sheet and run through a roller which presses the pasteboard down so heavily that an impression of the type and other matter in the form is left upon it. After a baking process to harden this mold, which is called a "matrix," it is

placed in a curved position in another mold, and metal then poured around it hardens into a semi-cylindrical plate. This plate is cleaned and trimmed and carried down to the first floor on a small lift provided for that purpose.

And, Finally
the Finished
Product

Directly into the press room comes the plate, to be locked in place on its roller on The Argus' new \$60,000 Duplex press. All of the pages are thus put in place, the print paper webs adjusted, and the cogs of the big electrically driven machine start grinding out the edition.

Getting the News
to You With All
Possible Speed

Near the press, in the mailing room, a score of men and boys then battle against time to wrap and address the papers and get them to depots or the postoffice in time to make early trains for their destinations. They also count papers for the carrier boys, and these papers are taken by truck to the starting points of the various routes out in the residence districts. Soon afterward, at his home or place of business, each subscriber receives the day's news of the world, and the people of The Argus have completed another day's work.



Speed of Production Increased By Augmenting and Improving Mechanical Equipment

ADDITIONS to the mechanical equipment of The Argus, notably a \$60,000 press, and improvements made in the system generally, have all tended to speed up production.

Press Will Print
60,000 Papers
an Hour

The press, which may be seen from the sidewalk on the Eighteenth street side of the building through several of the large arched windows, is equal to that in any office in any city of similar size in the United States. It is a Duplex unit type low construction sextuple press. Having a capacity of 48 pages, it will run up to a speed of 60,000 papers an hour, printed, folded and counted. It is arranged in units so that it may be added to at any time to take care of future needs.

Low Construction
Type—All Parts
Accessible From
the Floor

As installed, this machine consists of three 16-page printing sections arranged in tandem, with double folders placed between units. Being of the low construction type, every part is accessible from the floor, this innovation in press construction proving vastly superior to the old "decker" type of machine, which towered in the air and could be added to only by placing additional decks one above the other. The press is so arranged that it may print two 24-page papers and deliver them into separate folders, each side of the press being devoted to the printing of a distinctive paper if desired. The rolls of paper are placed overhead.

Can Never Be
Entirely "Out of
Commission"

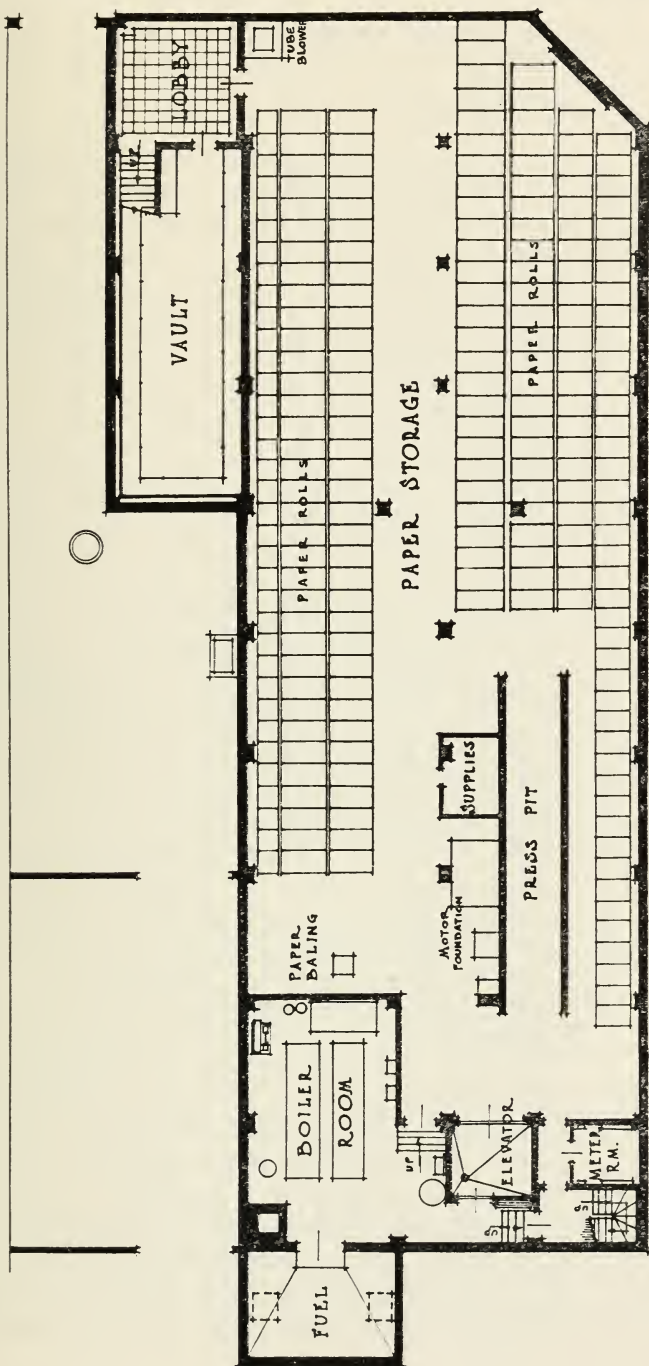
Any one or two of the three printing sections may be silenced when not in use. This is a most desirable feature in case of breakdown, as it would be practically impossible for the entire press to be out of commission at any one time. Because of the independent drive of each folder, insurance as to folding and delivering is also obtained. The press is driven by electric power through a long drive shaft, the power being transmitted to the units and folders by a bevel gear drive, all of which mechanism is concealed under the floor and is entirely out of the way of the press room force.

Fitted to Last
Thousandth of
an Inch

The entire equipment, which was built by the Duplex Printing Press company of Battle Creek, Mich., is fitted for the most strenuous service, all materials entering into its construction being the best obtainable and in accordance with the most approved methods of engineering. The workmanship entering into the manufacture of this equipment is superior also, as only the most proficient mechanics are capable of doing the fine and accurate work required by the Duplex Printing Press company in the construction of its machines. Every working part is ground down to the last thousandth of an inch and many of the important parts that require this accuracy are brought down to even a quarter of a thousandth of an inch.

New Stereo
Equipment

The additional speed provided by this new press is only one such feature of many to be found in the new plant. New equipment in the stereotyping room, where metal plates, in which form the type reaches the press, are made from pages of type and cuts made



THE ARGUS BUILDING
THE J.W. POTTER COMPANY
ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS.

BASEMENT PLAN

SCALE 0 2 4 6 8 10 20

CLYVIN & HORN, ARCHITECTS
ROCK ISLAND, ILLINOIS.

up in the composing room, makes that department capable of better and faster service.

Air Tubes Connect All Departments

A pneumatic system with tubes 2¼ inches in diameter, similar to the type seen in up-to-date department stores for sending cash, has been installed to connect various departments. This tube system will supplement the phone system and is especially valuable in a newspaper plant. It will permit the transmission of written messages from one station to another. A message which originates in the editor's office, for example, which is to reach the composing room, is placed in one of these containers and quickly drawn to the operator's room on first floor from which it is transferred to the proper tube to go to the proper department. Action is very rapid and this installation is considered valuable. Its principal function will be to connect the advertising department and the composing room. The stations that are connected by the tube system are the following: Editor's office, treasurer's office, business office, news room and composing room. Supplementing the tube system, there is a special Baldwin air line conveyor going directly from editorial desks in the news room to the composing room, depositing its contents there and returning to the editorial desks in the news room, automatically.

Conduits for Phones and Electricity

Telephones are very generously distributed throughout the building, with special outlets at all desks in the news room and points where connections are desirable. Conduits are placed in all floors to make it possible to tap in at numerous points. Conduits are also placed for a system of electrical clocks in principal rooms, operated by central control.

Serving the Public in the New Building

**Three Features
Increase Usefulness
to General Public**

ALTHOUGH The Argus has always recognized its obligation to serve its community in every way possible, and to provide all conveniences within its scope for every one residing in the territory whether a subscriber or not, this branch of endeavor is increased greatly by the facilities provided by the new Argus building. An auditorium for public gatherings, bulletin service which may well be termed perfect, and better provision for telephone information are the principal features to be noted.

**Auditorium
Available for
Public Meetings**

The auditorium will be available for public or semi-public gatherings upon application to the publishers. It is a well-appointed room on the mezzanine floor, opening off the southwest corner of the gallery which extends around two sides of the business office. The dimensions of the auditorium are 24x60 feet, and it will accommodate about 200 persons.

**More Room and
Better Bulletin
Service**

When crowds gather at The Argus office to obtain the results of big athletic contests, news of elections or the other information of great interest which draws thousands annually to observe the bulletins, many of the inconveniences which were experienced by such spectators in the old days on Second avenue will be absent.

The specially constructed bulletin window placed in the northeast facade, just over the main entrance, is like a large show window with its pane of clear plate glass, lighted

THE STORY OF THE ARGUS

Every Facility
for Public
Service

from above by a row of concealed incandescents. Inside the window, in a small room provided for that purpose, the baseball or football playing board will be erected, or, in the case of election returns, a picture projector screen will be fixed. The regular daily baseball bulletins, giving the results by innings of all principal league games, will be provided in enlarged form in the big bulletin window. Election returns will be projected from the mezzanine gallery inside the building.

"Nerve Center,"
Also Source of
Phone Information

All ganglia of the new building's "nervous system" center at the point where telephone information is given out. Frequently there are many calls for information on events of national or extreme local importance, especially on the nights of election or of big baseball or football games. Subscribers and non-subscribers alike are freely given the latest bulletins on such affairs by telephone. The telephone switchboard operator, who also is required to give out this information, will be more than ever able to obtain the news quickly and authentically through the system incorporated into the new plant. For she will not only have supervision of all incoming and outgoing calls, but of inter-departmental calls as well, and of the pneumatic tube carrier system which penetrates to all parts of the structure. The switchboard inclosure, in the northwest corner of the first floor, adjacent to the business office and the main doorway, will also be the central station for the tube system. Through the tubes and inter-departmental phones a great part of the information she will disseminate by phone reaches her as soon as it arrives in the building.

I Am the Newspaper

BORN of the deep, daily need of a nation—I am the Voice of Now—the incarnate spirit of the Times—Monarch of things that Are. ¶ My “cold type” burns with the fire-blood of human action. I am fed by arteries of wire that girdle the earth. I drink from the cup of every living joy and sorrow. I know no death, yet I am born again with every morn—with every noon—with every twilight. I leap into fresh being with every new world’s event. ¶ Those who created me cease to be—the brains and hearts’-blood that nourish me go the way of human dissolution. Yet I live on—and on. ¶ I am Majestic in my Strength—Sublime in my Power—Terrible in my Potentialities—yet as democratic as the ragged boy who sells me for a penny. ¶ I am the consort of Kings—the partner of capital—the brother of toil. The inspiration of the hopeless—the right arm of the needy—the champion of the oppressed—the conscience of the criminal. I am the epitome of the world’s Comedy and Tragedy. ¶ My responsibility is Infinite. I speak, and the world stops to listen. I say the word, and battle flames the horizon. I counsel peace, and the war-lords obey. I am greater than any individual—more powerful than any group. I am the dynamic force of Public Opinion. Rightly directed, I am a Creator of Confidence. A builder of happiness in living. I am the Backbone of Commerce. The Trail-Blazer of Prosperity. I am the teacher of Patriotism. ¶ I am the hands of the clock of Time—the clarion voice of Civilization. ¶ I am the Newspaper.

From address delivered by Joseph H. Finn,
at the Associated Advertising Clubs of the
World Convention. Chicago, June 22, 1915.

Aledo Democrat Publishing Company
Aledo, Illinois





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